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ABSTRACT

Little experimental research exists concerning third party mediation. Possible dimensions for study are type of control, including outcome control (of the third party over negotiation outcomes) and process control (third party influence on the negotiation process); and type of intervention, i.e., process or issue oriented interventions. To examine the interaction between type of intervention and type of control, male undergraduates (N=40) were led to believe they were randomly assigned to the role of negotiator for an experimental task, involving the resolution of a rent control problem. The actual negotiation sessions lasted approximately 1 hour and consisted of 12 trials. A pre-programmed adversary was used to increase situational stress and reduce irrelevant variance due to individual differences. The independent variables were type of third party control and intervention; the dependent variables were frequency of concessions and retaliations. Statistical analyses showed that the time factor was significant, with more concessions made initially, and the majority of retaliations occurring in the final block of sessions. This finding suggests that the effectiveness of a mediator may decline over the course of negotiations. No significant effects were found for type of intervention or for the interaction of third party factors. (WAS)

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THE EFFECT OF DIFFERING THIRD PARTY ROLES
AND BEHAVIORS ON CONCILIATORY AND RETALIATORY
NEGOTIATOR BEHAVIOR INVOLVED IN A SIMULATED
INTERGROUP CONFLICT

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As Rubin (1980) noted there has been little experimental analysis of third party mediation. Much of the area is an amalgamation of practitioners and theorists, each drawing on their own background and experience. These interventions have been applied to problems at the international (Doob & Foltz, 1973, 1974; Walton, 1970; Young, 1967) the interaorganizational/intergroup (Blake, Shepard, & Moulton, 1964; Fisher & White 1975), and the interpersonal level (Erickson, Holmes, Frey, Walker & Thibaut, 1974; Satir, 1964; Walton, 1969) with form of intervention necessitates a critical examination of its theoretical and conceptual underpinnings.

Several investigators (Rubin & Brown 1975; Rubin 1982) have highlighted relevant dimensions underlying the area of third party consultation. For example Brookmire and Sistrunk (1980) examined various personality characteristics associated with effective mediators. Two of the most well examined dimensions are the type of control exercised by the third party and the focus of their intervention.

Type of Control

Thibaut, Walker and colleagues (La Tour, Houlden, Walker & Thibaut 1976; Lind, Kurtz, Mustane, Walker & Thibaut, 1980; Houlden La Tour, Walker & Thibaut, 1978; Walker, La Tour Lind & Thibaut, 1974) have suggested that the third parties role can best be viewed in terms of how much control the third party has over the outcome of the negotiations (Outcome Control) and how much control he exercises over the negotiation process (Process Control).

Outcome Control

La Tour, and associates (1976) have postulated a continuum of possible third party interventions, ranging from: bargaining, where no third-party is present; arbitration, where the third party is limited to making suggestions; to compulsory arbitration, where he/she determines the actual outcome.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Process Control

The second major factor involves the amount of control the third party may exercise over the negotiation. Figure 2 presents a brief overview of process control. Walton (1969) and others (Fisher, 1972; Young, 1967) have advocated strong interventions during the negotiations, such as structuring the meeting and setting the agenda. While others (Johnson & Pruitt, 1972; Johnson & Tullar, 1972; Pruitt & Johnson, 1970) tend to view the third party as almost an observer during the actual negotiations.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Type of Intervention

The second major dimension by which third party consultation can be examined is by the type of intervention made. One method of conceptualizing this is to examine the range of possible impact sites. On one end of the spectrum might be interventions directed at resolving specific tangible problems, i.e. wages, benefits, shift differentials etc., while at the other end enhancing the communication skills, understanding the other side's perspective, etc. While this continuum is clearly an over simplification it does suggest one method for understanding mediation. Figure 3 provides an overview

Insert Figure 3 about here

from a research standpoint a number of interesting hypotheses may be drawn from these dimensions. Previous investigations (Bartunek Benton & Keys, 1975; Bigones, 1976; Pruitt & Johnson, 1972) have tended to compare points along only one of the dimensions while disregarding the other. As part of a larger study the present investigation simultaneously compared two of the more prominent third party roles, while examining two types of interventions. While it was anticipated that there would be several significant effects due to either the type of intervention or the type of control of special interest is the interaction between these factors.

Little is known about the interplay between the third party role and type of intervention. Process-Issue oriented interventions combine the attributes of an Issue Orientation - making concrete suggestions for

problem resolution with the frequency and directiveness associated with a Process Control position. Prior studies (Bartunek et al., 1975; Bigones 1976) have indicated that separately these factors produce more agreements than other forms of mediation. It is anticipated that their combination will result in significantly more and larger concessions than any other conditions. Similarly in the case of retaliations little is known about the impact of various combinations of third party attributes. It is hypothesized that Outcome-Interpersonally Oriented Intervention would produce the fewest and smallest number of retaliations.

Methods

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 40 male undergraduates enrolled in various Psychology courses at the University of South Carolina.

Task and Materials

The negotiation task involved the resolution of a rent control problem. Through the instructions and the structure of the experiment, subjects were led to believe that they were randomly assigned to the role of tenant negotiator. The actual negotiation sessions lasted approximately one hour and consisted of 12 trials. Subjects responded via written communications.

Pre-Programmed Adversary To increase the amount of situational stress and reduce irrelevant variance due to individual differences (Wall, 1979) this study employed a Pre-Programmed Adversary (PPA).

During the first three trials the he made small concessions, on trial four there was no change in his offer. From trial five until the final trial the he responded in kind to the subjects offers. The purpose of this was to set up a stituation in which there was a possibility of an impasse.

Procedure

All subjects met in groups of four and were intially informed of the various roles and tasks involved. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four soundproof cubicals. There they found a packet informing them that they were to act as the negotiator for the community group.

In the Process Control Condition subjects were told that a knowledgeable third party would ass't in the negotiations, arrange the specific agenda, help focus subjects on relevant issues, and make appropriate comments and suggestions. They were also informed that the final outcome rested with them.

While in the Outcome Control Condition subjects were informed that a knowledgeable third party would oversee the negotiations, make appropriate comments and suggestions when necessary, but that the actual structure of the negotiations was left up to the participants. However if the two parties were unable to reach an agreement, he would make the final decision.

Prior to the first trial subjects received a statement propoertedly from their coordinator informing them of the organizations goals for the negotiation. The Process Control subjects recieved after every trial a statement from the third party. The content of it varied depending upon

the type of intervention condition. Subjects in the Outcome Condition received statements after trials 4, 7, 9, 10, 12.

Independent Variables

The first independent variable was the role of the third party. This manipulation was introduced via the initial instructions supplied to the subjects. Depending upon the role of the third party, he either made sporadic comments (Outcome Control) or responded after each trial (Process Control).

The second variable, type intervention, was for the issue condition a composite of statements used in other studies (Bartunek et al. 1975; Podell and Knapp, 1969; Pruitt and Johnson, 1970). In these the focus was on the actual issues at hand and involved making suggestions about the possible range of outcomes or suggesting a possible outcome. While the interpersonally oriented intervention consisted of two types of statements. The first, involved suggestions that the two parties might reach some understanding and that this might facilitate the rest of the bargaining. The second statement was modeled after the work of Palo Alto Group (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Frisch, 1974) on 'positive reframing'. Here the third party attempted to provide a plausible rationale for the Programed Adversary's behavior and requested the subject to continue bargaining in good faith.

Dependent Variables

Previous studies have focused primarily on the outcome of the negotiation, i.e. number of agreements, equity of agreement, etc. While this approach has obvious value it fails to assess the impact of the mediator on the negotiation process. The present investigation focused on the interaction between negotiators. The two major variables were the frequency of both concessions and retaliations. Concessions were operationally defined as a net decrease in the proposed settlement from one trial to next, while retaliations were defined as a net increase.

Analysis

The design was a 2 X 2 X 4 repeated measures design with two between and one within subjects variables. The results were analyzed via a multiple analysis of variance (Hull & Nie, 1981). For simplicity, the trial were grouped into blocks of three and the frequencies averaged. All frequency data was transformed using Winer's Square Root Conversion.

Results

Table 1 presents the resulting F tests for the Multiple Analysis of Variance. As expected the time factor was significant, more concessions were made initially while the majority of retaliations occurred in the final block of trials

Insert Table 1 about here

The only other significant MANOVA result was for the time by type of control interaction. Inspection of the univariate results, Tables 2 and 3, indicate that this effect was due to a significant effect for concessions. Figure 4 present this interaction. Testing for simple main effects indicated that the Type of Third Party Control was significant different at Times 1, 2 and 4 (Time 1: $F(1,288) = 7.935, p > .001$; Time 2: $F(1,288) = 7.935, p < .001$; Time 2: $F(1,288) = 26.49, p < .0001$; Time 4: $F(1,288) = 14.834, p < .001$). Tests for mean differences indicated that at Times 1 and 2 Process Control was significantly greater than Outcome Control. For Time 4 this pattern was reversed.

Insert Figure 4 and Tables 2 and 3 about here

No significant effects were noted for either the type of intervention or the interaction of third party factors.

DISCUSSION

It is interesting to speculate on possible reasons for the lack of significant effects for the type of intervention. One possibility is that the third party statements differed only slightly and failed to produce the desired impact. However prior piloting indicated that subjects found significant differences between the statements. Another possible factor may have been the subtle nature of the intervention. By combining the trials the effect of the statements may have been obliterated. Clearly if this was the case it only reinforces the notion that the statements

may have only limited impact. However further analysis of this point is in order.

The significant effect for the interaction of time and the type of control was anticipated. Prior studies produced similar results, however the pattern of these results are different. In previous studies once the third party had intervened there were rapid concessions and agreements were reached. In the present experiment this wasn't the case. Subject in the Process Condition made more concessions during the first two blocks of trial than their Outcome condition counterparts. The surprising reversal of conditions during the final block of trials may have been due to a statistical artifact or decrease in compliance with the mediators requests. Concerning the first point an examination of the data found that there was no significant increase in the number of agreements during the final block of trials. Hence it was not that subjects could no longer make concessions. Thus it appears that the subjects did not comply with the requests of the mediator. One can infer that the effectiveness of a mediator may, over the course of the negotiation decline.

From a theoretical perspective these results suggest that the 'chilling effect' noted by previous investigators may be due in part to a reticence or failure to intervene early in the negotiation. It appears that active involvement by the third party will overcome individual resistance to making initial concessions.

In terms of the frequency of retaliations it appears that neither type of control or intervention had a significant effect. This inability to impact subject's retaliation may be indicative of possible third

party limitations. Using Brown's (1977) conceptualization, retaliations occur when subjects feel a need to 'save face'. For this particular issue the third party interventions failed to sufficiently reduce this need, hence subjects retaliated. However it remains to be determined if the frequency of retaliations may not have been actually higher if a third party wasn't present.

Based on these results it is possible to create some generalizations about the attributes and behaviors of an effective third party. For example the most effective tactic seemed to be one of repeated contact with the parties involved. Caution should be exercised in terms of pressing for concessions, particularly if one side is being unyielding. Failure to do so may result in a decrease in subject's compliance with the mediator's requests. A high level of involvement also produces an image of the third party as powerful, but impartial, and increases his control over the negotiation. Both useful goals for the mediator.

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TABLE 1

MANOVA SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE FREQUENCY OF
CONCESSIONS AND RETALIATIONS

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>F^a</u>	<u>PR>p</u>
Con1 (C1)	2,35	0.69	ns.
Con2 (C2)	2,35	0.15	ns.
C1 X C2	2,35	0.99	ns.
Time (TI)	6,214	5.62	.0001
TI X C1	6,214	2.25	.03
TI X C2	6,214	0.62	ns.
TI X C1 X C2	6,214	1.09	ns.

Note:

Con1 = Type of Control (Outcome or Process)

Con2 = Type of Intervention (Interpersonal or Issue)

a = Based on Wilkes λ Criterion

TABLE 2
ANOVA SUMMARY TABLE FOR FREQUENCY OF
CONCESSIONS

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>η^2</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Con1 (C1)	1	0.112	0.112	.002	0.28	ns.
Con2 (C2)	1	0.068	0.068	.001	0.17	ns.
C1 x C2	1	0.034	0.034	.000	0.09	ns.
Error	36	14.527	0.403			
Time (TI)	3	3.893	1.297	.101	8.14	.0001
TI X C1	3	1.715	0.571	.044	3.58	.01
TI X C2	3	0.537	0.179	.014	1.12	ns.
TI X C1 X C2	3	0.237	0.079	.006	0.50	ns.
Error	108	17.227	0.159			
Total	159	38.354				

Note:

Con1 = Type of Control (Outcome or Process)

Con2 = Type of Intervention (Interpersonal or Issue)

TABLE 3
ANOVA SUMMARY TABLE FOR FREQUENCY OF
RETALIATIONS

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>η^2</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Con1 (C1)	1	0.088	0.088	.011	1.30	ns.
Con2 (C2)	1	0.005	0.005	.000	0.08	ns.
C1 x C2	1	0.138	0.138	.018	2.04	ns.
Error	36	2.455	0.068			
Time (TI)	3	0.466	0.155	.062	4.21	.007
TI X C1	3	0.111	0.037	.014	1.00	ns.
TI X C2	3	0.016	0.063	.002	0.15	ns.
TI X C1 X C2	3	0.194	0.036	.025	1.75	ns.
Error	108	3.988	0.036			
Total	159	7.466				

Note:

Con1 = Type of Control (Outcome or Process)

Con2 = Type of Intervention (Interpersonal or Issue)

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Outcome Control

OUTCOME CONTROL

- May range from bargaining (No Third Party Present) to binding arbitration (Final Decision made by Third Party)
- Relationship between parties based on prior agreement either cultural or legal
- Interventions often limited to tangible issues
- Third Party attempt to remain impartial, may appear aloof
- Research: Most interest now on the effect of 'awaiting arbitration' the chilling effects of binding arbitration

Figure Caption

Figure 2. Process Control

PROCESS CONTROL

- May range from simple interventions (asking questions, setting agendas) to complex multi-system intervention (Group Relations Workshops)
- Often Third Party has no formal or legal relationship with parties involved prior to the negotiation
- Interventions may range from the tangible issues to group process, interpersonal awareness
- Third party is very involved in the negotiation process
- Research: Attempts to operationalize aspects of Process Interventions, focusing on both the macro and micro behaviors

Figure Caption

Figure 3. Types of Interventions:
Interpersonally Oriented and Issue Oriented
Interventions

TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

Interpersonally Oriented

- Often has the goal of improving the relationship between parties, through changes in attitude and perceptions
- Focus is on the interchange between individuals
- Specific behaviors include, structuring the meetings, group exercises, paraphrasing, setting agendas, etc.

Issue Oriented

- Has the goal of settling the problem at hand in the most efficient manner possible
- Focus is on the substantive issues separating the individuals
- Specific behaviors include, convening the meeting, fact finding, specific suggestions, equity methods, invoking past standards, etc.

Figure Caption

Figure 4. Interaction of Time by Type of Control for the
Frequency of Concessions

